



WHAT TO DO WHEN SOCIETY EXPLODES

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How to Survive a Dirty Bomb, EMP, or Terrorist Attack with Martial Law Survival Tips

Global relations are shaky at best. Every day the news seems to report a story of violent acts being committed somewhere in the world. Although experts may disagree as to the exact nature of an attack, most will agree that a large-scale attack is imminent.

Surviving a catastrophe is difficult but with proper planning it is not impossible. Those who prepare before an attack actually occurs will be in a much better position post-disaster. But how do you prepare for an attack when no one knows exactly what kind of attack is most likely to happen? Fortunately, many of the survival techniques are the same regardless of the exact scenario. However, there are also some differences and the specifics of surviving each scenario can vary drastically.

Understanding the events that are likely to occur after each of the following disaster scenarios allows you to understand what the similarities are. Armed with this information, you can devise a survival plan that encompasses the most common difficulties you anticipate happening. A well-rounded survival plan that takes multiple scenarios into account is a much more powerful asset than a plan that only accounts for a single event and consequences that are specific only to that scenario.

Dirty Bomb

Unlike a conventional nuclear device, a dirty bomb uses standard explosives laced with radioactive residue. When the bomb is detonated, the initial explosion is certainly a concern but the nuclear material introduced into the area is even more troubling. To keep the device small enough for easy transport, dirty bombs are often not very powerful explosives especially in comparison to their nuclear counterparts. The blast radius may only be a couple hundred feet. The fallout, however, can be spread over miles and produce widespread radiation poisoning as a result.

What makes a dirty bomb such a realistic threat is that it can be constructed using nuclear waste. A standard fission nuclear device relies on purified radioactive isotopes such as uranium or plutonium. Although it is possible for terrorist organizations to acquire these heavily regulated materials, it is very difficult to do so. The waste leftover from the purification process is much easier to obtain. It may only have a fraction of the radioactivity of the purified element, but it is enough to produce devastating results when detonated near large populations of people.

Aside from the immediate deaths from the explosive blast itself, many of the effects of a dirty bomb could take months or years to fully manifest. The amount of radiation introduced into the area from a dirty bomb will not be enough to kill anyone quickly. Rather, those who were close to the blast will experience mild radiation sickness. Symptoms include nausea, headaches, and vomiting from exposure to unhealthy levels of uranium, plutonium, or other radioactive substances. These symptoms will pass and it could be years before the long term effects of exposure begin to be felt. Organ failure and other health problems will begin to affect those who were nearby or downwind of the blast.

Experts agree that a dirty bomb attack is much more likely to occur than a conventional nuclear attack. A true nuclear device takes skilled professionals and specialized equipment to construct but a dirty bomb can be made relatively easily without any special training or knowledge. The good news is that although scary, a dirty bomb is not nearly as dangerous as other types of explosive devices. In fact, dirty bombs are often referred to as “weapons of mass *disruption*” because the fear and disruption caused by radiation decontamination efforts is usually more significant than the destruction created by the blast itself. Even the nuclear side effects can be mitigated and contained to a small percentage of the population.

Evacuate If Necessary

If an explosion occurs and radiological contamination is confirmed or is still unknown, it is imperative to stay inside if possible. Radiation cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. You will not know if your body is being contaminated unless you start to display the symptoms of radiation poisoning.

The biggest danger from a dirty bomb is the spread of nuclear debris as the wind carries it away from the blast site. Look for indicators of which way the wind is blowing. The areas directly downwind from the explosion will have the highest concentrations of radioactive debris and be the most dangerous for people without proper radiation equipment. Look at the cloud of dust and debris from the blast and see what direction it is moving. Also look at flags in the area or even garbage blowing across the street to determine the wind direction.

If you find yourself downwind of the blast, consider evacuating the area quickly. The reality is that many, if not most, cities and towns are not equipped to deal with large scale radioactive contamination and official evacuation and decontamination procedures could take hours or even days to institute properly. In this time, you may be exposed to high levels of radiation by staying where you are.

After making the decision to evacuate, make a plan to calmly evacuate in a direction opposite the prevailing winds and associated nuclear fallout. Use a cloth shirt or similar material to cover your mouth and nose while evacuating. Breathing in contaminated dust and ash can lead to more severe symptoms. The use of commercially available gas masks is not advisable because the filters of these devices can become clogged within minutes.

Since the spread of nuclear debris will not be as rapid with a dirty bomb, the best method of evacuation is walking. Public transportation will be very congested. You also risk further contamination while traveling public transportation and the possible dangers associated with mass hysteria. Driving your own vehicle is a better option but other vehicle traffic could make efficient evacuation nearly impossible as potentially millions of people attempt to leave the area simultaneously. Often bottlenecks in roadways such as tunnels or bridges become so congested that movement is impossible. If you find yourself in this situation, consider ditching your car and continuing on foot.

Staying Where You Are

Evacuation is not always the best solution. If you are upwind of the blast site, radiation exposure is not as much of a concern. Stay where you are assuming there is no immediate threat to your safety. As an additional safety precaution, turn off the ventilation system in the building. This ensures that no stray radioactive debris enters the air supply to your shelter.

Seal all doors and windows with plastic sheeting if available. Use tape to seal the cracks at the very least. Radioactive dust will find its way into your home especially if the wind changes direction hours or even days after the attack.

Do not consume any water from public supplies until they have been properly tested by authorities. The water could be contaminated. In fact, many terrorist organizations may try to contaminate the local water supply with radioactive debris intentionally to increase the overall potency of the attack. Common methods of water purification such as boiling are not effective against radioactive contamination. Consume bottled water if possible or wait until authorities have tested the public water supply before drinking it.

A significant dirty bomb attack could leave areas near the blast site uninhabitable for years. You should have a secondary location outside the affected area where you can seek shelter if this becomes an issue. Authorities will often set up temporary

shelters for people who have been displaced by a disaster. Unfortunately, these areas are typically overcrowded and should be avoided whenever possible.

Electromagnetic Pulse

An electromagnetic pulse (EMP) is a weapon designed to disrupt electronic devices and sometimes even the entire electrical grid of an area. A strong electric pulse is created that damages electrical equipment within a certain radius depending on the strength and design of the EMP. EMP's can be created in different ways with one of the most powerful being a high altitude nuclear explosion where the primary intent is to disrupt electronics in the target area. Of course the risk of nuclear contamination is also a concern when delivering an EMP in this method.

An EMP can also occur as a result of natural occurrences. Scientists have realized for some time that a solar flare is capable of disabling the electronics around the world almost instantly. Far from the terrorist threats news outlets often discuss, a solar flare would be more devastating than even the worst EMP a terrorist organization could assemble. Although a terrorist EMP threat may be difficult to predict, a solar flare is literally impossible to predict. It only takes eight minutes for energy from the sun to reach Earth. This is not enough time to disseminate information regarding the EMP to the public.

Act Immediately

When the power first goes out, especially as a result of a solar flare, most people will not be too concerned. Most will equate the outage to an inconvenience similar to that experienced when the power goes out during a storm. They will not understand the gravity of the situation or that the power will be out for months or even years. By acting immediately after the EMP strikes, you will be able to prepare even if you did not take the time to prepare for this scenario in advance.

An EMP will disable all electronic devices. TV, radio, lights, and modern cars will no longer function as the EMP will have effectively "fried" the circuit boards inside them. Even if you have a backup generator it will not work after an EMP event.

Hopefully you have cash on hand to make purchases because all credit processing machines will be down. During the first day following an EMP, many stores will remain open albeit in a limited fashion. This means you can travel from store to store stocking up on necessary food, water, and medical supplies. Assuming you have a modern car that has been rendered inoperable by the EMP, you will be required to

walk or ride a bicycle for travel. The only vehicles that will work are considered simple gas vehicles. These include older cars that do not rely on computer systems, many tractors, and some motorcycles.

If you have access to one of these vehicles, do not let people see you driving it around town as you stock up on supplies. Although most people will be calm immediately following the EMP, the realization that life will not be going back to normal any time soon does not take long to set in. Shortly after that, panic takes hold and chaos ensues. If people see that you have a working vehicle, you are extremely susceptible to attack. This is especially true once rioting and other violence begins. Save the vehicle for after you have gathered all the supplies you need and are ready to evacuate the area for good.

Long Term Consequences

Some disasters will only affect daily life for a few days or months. An EMP event is different. Experts say that a global EMP would effectively send the world back to the 1800's from a technology standpoint. It literally could take years to regain a sense of "normal"

following this catastrophic event. To survive an EMP successfully, long term survival should be the goal.

If you live in a heavily populated area, leave as soon as possible. Riots among people who did not prepare properly will begin and you do not want to be caught in the middle. Escape to a remote area where you can start over. This is why having a predetermined bug out location is so important. If you are not fortunate enough to already have a location in mind, try to find an area that is remote and provides natural resources whenever possible.

A wood powered heater is the best way to provide heat post-EMP. Gas heaters will also work but the availability of gas will quickly deteriorate. Especially if the area where you live has an abundance of trees, a wood burning stove will provide heat indefinitely.

Faraday Cage

In preparation for an EMP attack, you can construct a Faraday Cage to protect small electronic devices from the EMP pulse. Remember that the electrical grid will also be disabled so you will need a power source to use any of the devices you protect in the cage anyway.

A Faraday cage can be purchased but it can also be made at home quite easily. The cage works by surrounding sensitive electronics with conductive materials to

dissipate the electrical impulse of the EMP. A faraday cage can be any size and one of the most common methods is to build a frame and completely enclose it with very fine metal mesh. Items inside the cage will not be affected by the EMP and should remain usable after the event.

Another common method is to use a metal garbage can as a simple faraday cage. Although space is limited in an enclosure of this size, it can still house small items like flashlights and maybe even a radio easily. Decide how many important items you will need in a world devoid of electricity so you can accurately estimate the size of the enclosure you need.

Terrorist Attack

Either of the two above mentioned disasters could be initiated by terrorists but there are many other catastrophic events that could be the work of a terrorist organization. Biological warfare has become a serious concern as countries known to be havens for global terrorist organizations have adopted biological weapon testing programs. Nuclear attack is also a serious threat. Recent events in North Korea prove that the threat of nuclear attack is real. Chemical weapons can and have been used as agents of terror and history suggests that they could be used again.

In addition to the threats already mentioned, terrorists have been forced to come up with new methods in light of increased global security initiatives. The September 11th attacks were an example of how terrorists are using unconventional means to reach their goals. What this means is that there is no definitive way to know when or how a terrorist attack will occur. The only certainty is that terrorist attacks will occur. During America's global war on terrorism, training documents have been discovered that illustrate the complex methods terrorists have adopted to complete their objective. A combination of large scale attacks interspersed between a multitude of smaller attacks is the preferred terrorist recipe. Whether you find yourself a victim of a big or small attack, the consequences can be significant especially if you do not anticipate the aftermath before it happens.

General Preparation Strategies

Without knowing the exact nature of a given terrorist attack beforehand, it is impractical to plan for every single contingency. The costs would be high and finding a place to store equipment and gear specific to each type of attack would be difficult. Fortunately, it is possible to plan for terrorist attacks in general because many of the actions you take following one of these catastrophes will be similar. These same

strategies will also work well for natural disaster preparedness as these events can be equally as devastating.

Any good strategy begins with proper planning. This includes planning to stay home if conditions permit and it is deemed safe as well as planning to evacuate to a safe location if necessary. In the events immediately following a terrorist attack, panic will run rampant. The effects will be especially noticeable in large cities and other high population areas. Mass evacuation attempts could make travel nearly impossible. If you have thought about these possibilities ahead of time and instituted a plan to overcome possible obstacles you have a much better chance of survival.

Ideally, you should establish survival strategies for your home and for a secondary bug out location. Often it is safer to stay home and defend your position if required on your own turf. Planning for survival at home following a terrorist attack means having enough food and supplies to last for at least a few weeks. It also requires being able to defend yourself adequately. In a post-terrorist attack era, look at your home like a fortress. It will need provisions to protect it from possible infiltration by terrorist cells or even other people who did not take time to prepare for this event appropriately.

Staying in your home requires having food supplies on hand to last for as long as you think you might be seeking refuge there. Non-perishable items are essential because you will not be able to rely on the power grid. It may have been damaged in the attack or it could be under the control of terrorists. Canned items that have an indefinite shelf life are ideal, they can be stored discreetly and do not require refrigeration.

Consider installing natural borders such as fences, trees, or shrubs around the perimeter of your property. This makes the home much less tempting to potential assailants looking to clear the area or possibly steal the supplies you have stored for personal use.

Your home should also have a safe room. It can be an interior room in the house without windows or be located in the basement. Not only does a safe room provide protection from an initial attack but it serves as a retreat location if your home comes under attack at any time in the future.

If the event lasts longer than a few weeks or if your home is not safe due to damage, biological weapons, or bands of insurgent terrorists roaming the streets, it is time to evacuate. If you took the time to set up a secondary bug out location ahead of time consider yourself way ahead of the curve. A safe, preferably remote, location that is already stocked with food, fresh water, and other supplies can serve as an excellent

place to buy some time and figure out the next move. If the terrorist attack is localized to a specific area, you may be able to stay in this bug out location indefinitely. At the very least, getting away from the immediate vicinity will keep you safe from possible chemical or biological agents and terrorist ground forces.

Another technique that terrorists could use is water contamination. By intentionally polluting the drinking supply of a large city the scope of an attack is increased exponentially. Even if the water supply is not targeted directly, an attack could render water treatment facilities useless. Either way, the ability to purify your own drinking water is essential. Although people can last for days or even weeks without food, water is required by the body on an almost daily basis. Boiling or chemical treatments are both effective purification methods but can typically only purify small amounts of water at a time. If you are fortunate enough to have selected a bug out location that includes a freshwater source such as a stream or river you should have more than enough water at your disposal.

The reality is that depending on the severity of the attack, you may never be able to go home. Life as you know it could be over and you will be forced to start again in a new location without the technology you have grown accustomed to. A biological or radiological weapon could leave entire regions of the country uninhabitable for decades. The influx of residents to other areas of the country will strain the resources in those areas. Although it may not seem like the ideal conditions, living in a remote location off the grid is the best way to ensure your survival after a cataclysmic event such as a terrorist attack or large scale EMP resulting from a solar flare.

Surviving Martial Law

Martial law is the suspension of all Constitutional rights as a result of a serious natural disaster or an attack on domestic soil. It can be instituted at any time by the President without advanced warning. After martial law has been declared a number of changes will go into effect almost immediately. Curfews will be issued, basic goods will be rationed, firearms will be confiscated, and armed soldiers will patrol the streets looking for violators.

Surrendering to a martial law state means putting all your trust in the government to care of you and protect you in a time of crisis. The fact that you are reading this means that you at least have doubts about the government's ability to do this effectively. History has proven that the government is unable to perform tasks efficiently due to its large size and bureaucratic policies. In a state of martial law these shortcomings would become even more apparent.

Fighting directly against the soldiers enforcing martial law is a fool's errand. You will

not be able to take on thousands of soldiers equipped with specialized gear. When they come to your home to confiscate your firearms and possibly your food supplies, give them up without a problem. That is to say *appear* to do so. You should have food reserves and weapons hidden in multiple locations. One idea is to purchase an inexpensive firearm that you can hand over to the authorities. You could even complain about how you won't be able to defend yourself without a firearm to sweeten the story a little. With the large number of houses these soldiers likely have to visit, a somewhat convincing story should be enough to convince them that you do not have any other weapons and they will move on.

During martial law, self-defense is essential. Having firearms above and beyond what the government takes from you is necessary to defend yourself and your hidden food supplies. Although soldiers will be unlikely to raid your home for food or supplies after their initial visit, criminals looking for an easy target could very easily attack thinking that you are unarmed and vulnerable. Experts estimate that crime rates will increase dramatically during a prolonged state of martial law and you need the ability to defend your home from potential attackers.

Surviving martial law successfully requires altering your mindset completely. Authority figures are not your friends. In a normal environment, parents often teach their children that police officers are friendly and exist to help. The rules are different when the government has complete control over your actions. Even friends and neighbors can quickly become enemies in times like this. Looking to gain favor with authorities, a neighbor may tip them off about any possible food or weapons stores you may have. Be very careful of who you trust because people become very irrational during stressful times or when they are looking for more food for their own families.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't trust anyone. There will be other individuals that hold values similar to your own. Creating a survival network of people opposed to the martial law state can be very beneficial because it allows sharing of resources and information. Just make sure that those within the network are trustworthy individuals before divulging too much information.

Consider bugging out to a safe location if possible. Many times martial law is instituted regionally and restricted only to the area where a disaster has occurred. If this is the case, move outside the area to a place where you can continue to live freely and provide for yourself without fear of government intrusion. This may or may not be permitted according to the martial law statutes in place. It is better to evacuate covertly.

Remember that the government has powerful equipment such as satellites that can make escape difficult. Even if you do manage to get to a safer location, the government will find you eventually if they choose to. However, they may not deem you a threat if you are safely outside the limits of the affected area and might very well leave you alone.

Full-fledged martial law is a scary thought that can quickly become a reality following a significant natural disaster or terrorist attack. Although the government may have the best intentions, you are placed in a high risk situation when you are involuntarily disarmed and when your food supplies are taken from you. Planning to hide these assets during martial law gives you the advantage over the mindless sheep that make up much of the population.

Terrorist attacks of any magnitude and the martial law state that could follow are scary things to think about. Perhaps that is why many people choose ignorance. Although the ignorance of others may buy them some peace of mind in the short term, how do you think they will feel when disaster strikes and the reality of their own unpreparedness sinks in? Don't be one of these people. Realize that global catastrophe is a very real threat and take steps now to increase your chances of survival. The future of humanity could depend on your actions and those of similar mindset to rebuild society in a post-catastrophic era.